

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

APRIL 10, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. TEN EYCK submitted the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to whom was referred the memorial of Hetty G. Dorr, daughter of John D. Alvery, postmaster of the American army at headquarters, during the revolutionary war, praying "that the term officers, as used in the laws heretofore passed for the relief of the officers and soldiers of the revolution, their widows and orphans, be construed to embrace the said John Alvery, and that whatever pay or emoluments he or his widow may have failed to receive through a more strict construction of the said term, be paid, with interest, to their heirs or legal representatives, as if the rank of captain of infantry had been regularly assigned him, and his services had terminated with the war," beg leave to report:*

That it is established by documents signed by Generals Washington and Knox that the said John D. Alvery served as postmaster in the American army for near five years; that he had been attentive to his duty, and acted in a decent and becoming manner, suitable to his station, and was entitled to the regard and esteem of all good men. That he resigned his position as such postmaster on the 28th of March, 1783, only a few days before the termination of the war.

That it further appears, by reference to the Journal of the Continental Congress, that the said John D. Alvery was allowed the same pay and rations as were allowed to a captain of infantry.

It is manifest, however, that the services of the said John D. Alvery were of a *civil* and not of a *military* character; and, although your committee are fully satisfied that they were faithfully performed and meritorious, yet they were not such as the government has been in the habit of rewarding with bounties and donations over and above the pay allowed at the time the service was rendered. The committee believe that this distinction has always been observed, and think it is inadvisable to establish a new rule, under which a new class of claims may be introduced into Congress, unlimited in numbers, unprecedented in character, so far as their allowance by Congress heretofore has been concerned, and which the treasury, however full, could not withstand.

Your committee are unanimously of opinion that the prayer of the petitioner ought not to be granted, and they therefore report adversely thereto, and ask to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

